



April 2001 Newsletter

The April meeting of the Lost Villages Historical Society will be held on Monday, April 16, 2001, at the South Stormont Seniors' Support Centre in Ingleside, at 8:00 p.m. All members are encouraged to attend, and new members and "friends" are most welcome to attend. The executive of the society has been most encouraged by the outstanding show of support through regular attendance at the monthly meetings. All members are encouraged to sustain this interest and enthusiasm.

President Jim Brownell thanks all those who assisted with the March "Show and Tell". As well, he thanks Past-President Joan McEwan for chairing the meeting in his absence. He enjoyed an extended holiday in Florida, and thought about the society and its members on Monday, March 19, 2001. Reports indicate that a wide variety of artifacts, mementos and stories were shared at this meeting. Once again, "thank you" to all those who attended and contributed.

PROGRAM: Quite recently, the Lost Villages Historical Society was the recipient of approximately 180 coloured slides, from the estate of the late Freeman Elliott. Mr. Elliott, as many locals remember, was a photographer "par excellence", and we are indeed grateful to Mr. Nick Van Egmond for this kind donation to the society. At the April meeting, a showing of these slides will take place. Presently, society member, Allan Rafuse, is sorting the slides and providing titles to them. We thank Allan for this work, and we look forward to viewing Freeman's work. Allan has indicated that this is an outstanding collection, with views of many aspects of the Hydro and Seaway projects, and the former "Lost Villages". We encourage you to attend and provide extra details on the slides. We will prepare notes from comments given.

A SEPTEMBER WEDDING

The Sandtown Church at the Lost Villages Museum will be the scene of a September wedding. Michael Antoine and Tanya Cholette will be married in the church on Saturday, September 15, 2001, at 6:00 p.m. Although details must still be resolved, both the bride and groom were amazed at what they saw upon entering the church. Michael is a former student at Longue Sault Public School, and, having visited the museum with his class a number of years ago, he suspected that Jim Brownell was still connected with the activities at Ault Park. Therefore, the connection, and the reservation of the church for the September 15th wedding. Our museum buildings have established a profile for our society in the community. We hope that the public continues to support and use our facilities.

WEBSITE UP AND RUNNING!!

For those with internet service on the computer, check out the society's website. After much work, the site is up and running, and the society has moved into cyberspace. People, worldwide, will now be able to connect to the Lost Villages Historical Society through this website. As well, they will be able to make queries to the society in a fast and efficient way. Log on to the society's website at: www.lostvillages.ca

The society thanks Raymond Lacroix of Cornwall, and Jim Brydges of Ingleside, for their efforts and hard work in developing the site for the Lost Villages Historical Society. Both men have worked very hard with the creation of the CAP site in Ingleside, and they have been most patient as we worked to develop our site. There is still much work to do, however we can be proud of what has developed to date. All newsletters for 2000 and 2001 have been posted; a complete listing of all our events for 2001 have been posted; and information has been provided on our museum. As well, pictures of the museum buildings have been provided with the text.

Encourage your neighbours and friends with internet service to log onto the society's website. Should you have information which you would like to contribute, please let Jim Brownell know.

BAKE SALE, TUESDAY, MAY 29, 2001 (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE IN DATE)

STOP! STOP! Hold the cookie presses and put away the cook books for the time

being. As reported in the March newsletter, we will be unable to hold our “annual” spring BAKE SALE on Thursday, April 26, 2001. Although this date had been established for the bake sale at the Bank of Montreal, Cornwall, it was discovered that the bank had double-booked on this date. Therefore, we were asked to move our event to May. The bake sale will be held on Tuesday, May 29, 2001, at the Bank of Montreal, 159 Pitt Street, Cornwall, commencing at 10:00 a.m. As reported in the March newsletter, all members and “friends” are encouraged to support this major fundraiser for the society. Baked goods, jams, fudge, etc. etc. are appreciated, and these may be dropped off at the bank by 9:00 a.m. on the morning of the sale. As well, goods may be picked up or delivered by calling Vale Brownell at 537-2531, (Ingleside area), or Jim Brownell at 534-2423, (Long Sault area). Should you be able to assist at this event, please give Rita Canough or Mavis Nixon a call. Your help is appreciated.

SOUTH STORMONT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE “HOME AND TRADE SHOW”

After much success at the “Home and Trade Show” in 2000, the Lost Villages Historical Society is preparing for this year’s event. The South Stormont Chamber of Commerce will sponsor the “Home and Trade Show” at the Long Sault Arena on Friday, April 27, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday, April 28, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Plans are being finalized for this year’s booth, and we hope to match or better our success of last year. You will recall that the society’s booth captured second place at the show. The executive thanks all those who have signed up to look after the society’s booth, and we encourage you to attend the 2001 “Home and Trade Show”. The Chamber of Commerce has worked very hard to sponsor this event, and they are deserving of a strong showing of support from the community. Leslie O’Gorman, of “Nightingale Bed and Breakfast”, Ingleside, is the chairperson for the 2001 show. This “Home and Trade Show” is an excellent way in which to profile our society and museum.

CONGRATULATIONS GEORGE BLACKBURN

The Lost Villages Historical Society congratulates George Blackburn on his induction into the Order of Canada. As many members know, George Blackburn is a charter member of the Lost Villages Historical Society, and is best remembered, locally, for his efforts to provide “summer” and “permanent” theatre at the Prince

of Wales Theatre near Upper Canada Village. George worked his butt off to provide a meaningful and through-provoking drama of the Seaway story, in the musical “A Day to Remember”. Who can forget this outstanding musical!

Our society was honoured to host George Blackburn at the annual dinner meeting of the Lost Villages Historical Society in May, 1999, at Quinn’s Inn. As a charter member of our historical society, we were delighted that he accepted our invitation to be the guest speaker. George Blackburn, who wrote the trilogy; *Where the Hell are the Guns?*, *The Guns of Normandy*, and *The Guns of Victory*, books based on his experiences as an artillery soldier during the Second World war, was one of 98 people appointed to the Order of Canada by Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson, on February 14, 2001.

The Order of Canada was established in 1967 to recognize Canadians for their outstanding achievement and service in various fields. Appointments are made on the recommendation of an advisory council, chaired by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. George Blackburn’s nomination was through the efforts of a retired high school teacher from Harrowsmith, Ontario, who taught school in Toronto and Kingston.

All members of the Lost Villages Historical Society salute George Blackburn on this achievement, and wish he and his wife continued good health and happiness.

“A VIOLENT END” TO BE LAUNCHED

Word was recently received that Maggie Wheeler’s murder-mystery novel, “A Violent End”, will be launched at the “South Stormont Home and Trade Show”, sponsored by the South Stormont Chamber of Commerce. The launch will be held on Saturday, April 28, 2001, at the Long Sault Arena. Details have not been finalized, however you are encouraged to watch the local newspapers, and listen to the radio. Come out and support a local author from the Township of South Stormont. You will recall that Maggie addressed our historical society in 1999, as she prepared details for the novel.

A Violent End, —by Maggie Wheeler

Dr. Farran Mackenzie didn't know she had a past, until her one link to it had been snapped. Raised by her independent mother, Farran had come to accept that she belonged to a family of two. And that had satisfied both of them until her mother's sudden death revealed glimpses of unknown people and places—including

Farran's mother. Where did she come from? Who were her family? And what was the significance of a newspaper headline reporting the sudden discovery of a body, hundreds of miles away?

For the first time in forty years, one of the Lost Villages of the St Lawrence Seaway had emerged from its burial place beneath the flood waters. An unusually dry summer had laid bare streets, foundations, and the remains of a young man tied up in an ancient sleeping bag—Farran's father.

Taking advantage of a much needed sabbatical from her position teaching history at the University of Waterloo, Farran rents a cottage on Ault Island in the St Lawrence and sets about finding her parents' past.

Her first discovery proves a shock. No one had known it was even possible that she could exist. Yet the distress the old-timers from the Lost Villages feel upon learning that Farran's father had died and her mother had lived pales when the two who could most likely sort it out turn up dead.

Under the watchful eye of Detective Inspector Jerry Strauss, Farran begins applying her research skills to learn more about the people and events leading up to July 1, 1958, when the great waters of the St Lawrence Seaway were unleashed, tearing apart communities, and destroying her family. But will she uncover the river's secrets—and her father's murderer—before it is too late?

MORRISBURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY FORMED

The following press release was received from Shaun Wallace, the newly acclaimed president of the Morrisburg and District Historical Society. The Lost Villages Historical Society extends congratulations and best wishes to the executive and members of this new historical society in the “Seaway Valley” area, and we hope to work closely with them as we tell the story of the Hydro and Seaway projects of the 1950s.

History in the making: Morrisburg and District Historical Society Formed: A group of concerned local citizens met on the evening of March 19th for the purpose of forming an historical society for the village of Morrisburg and the surrounding district. After discussion the group was unanimous in selecting "The Morrisburg and District Historical Society" as the official name for the new group.

The goal of the society is to preserve and promote the history of the village of Morrisburg and the surrounding district. Shaun Wallace, acclaimed president,

states that this goal can be reached through the preservation and conservation of local history in order to communicate it to the community and visitors. He adds that education will be a very important activity in order to raise awareness of the area's past. "We will all be enriched by working together towards this goal", he states.

Other members of the Executive are Rev. Don Smith (Vice-President) and Janet Allingham, Secretary.

For more information about the society contact Shaun Wallace at 613-543-4103, E-mail: wallaces@glen-net.ca Mail: The Morrisburg and District Historical Society, P.O. Box 1333, Morrisburg, Ont. K0C 1X0

The Morrisburg and District Historical Society's plans for 2001: Relocating the "Williamsburg Canals" Historical site marker:

The Historic Sites marker commemorating the "The Williamsburg Canals" was unveiled on the Morrisburg waterfront in the summer of 1979. Since that auspicious day, many changes have occurred in and around the immediate area of the marker.

The marker presently resides east of the public washroom, south of the ball diamonds, and north of the foot path that follows the river bank. The maroon marker is mounted on a cement slab which is born by two steel supports. Both the cement slab and steel supports are in need of extensive repair. In its present orientation, the back of the marker is facing the path. To view the marker's inscription, visitors and residents have to venture off the path and then around to the front of the marker. As a result, when walking along the waterfront, you can actually walk right by the marker without even knowing that it is there.

Recently, the Morrisburg dock area has undergone extensive renovations which include new break walls, re-surfacing of the town pier, landscaping, shoreline improvements, new lighting, sidewalks and curbs. All of this effort has resulted in a beautiful and inviting environment. Many visitors and residents now come here to picnic or just to sit and watch the river.

The Morrisburg and District Historical Society is working with Parks Canada and the Township of South Dundas in restoring and relocating this marker to a more prominent location within the newly renovated dock area. This new location would bring attention to the marker and thus to the history of the former Williamsburg Canals.

Expanding the Walking Tour of Morrisburg: In 1992, Rev. Don Smith put together a self-guided walking tour on the older section of Morrisburg, highlighting the many homes and churches still located within their original settings. The tour commenced on the waterfront, at the village dock area, and then proceeded west along Lakeshore Drive, (the former Highway #2), to High Street. Here the tour headed north, up to Third Street, and then south on St. Lawrence Street to First Street. The energetic participants then had the option of heading east on First Street to Ottawa Street, and then south, returning to the dock area. This tour was originally prepared to aid the Chamber of Commerce in promoting the village.

The Morrisburg and District Historical Society has agreed to update and expand the tour this year by including additional information about the many historical homes it encompasses.

Sesquicentennial of the Naming of the Village of Morrisburg (1851- 2001). In 1838, a commission was established to look into improving navigation on the St. Lawrence River. Sir James Morris, as a commissioner, was instrumental in promoting the idea and the construction of the Williamsburg Canals on the St. Lawrence River. The canals were built between 1844-1856 on the north side of the St. Lawrence River to form part of the Great Lakes Navigation System. The construction of the canals on the front of Dundas County provided the impetus for the growth of a village then called West Williamsburg.

In 1850, postal affairs were transferred from London, England to the United Province of Canada. The Province of Canada passed the "Post Office Act" the same year. Sir James Morris was named the first Postmaster-General of Canada on February 22, 1851. Under his direction postal rates were reduced from 16 cents to 5 cents and postal services were greatly expanded and many towns received official post offices. In 1851, when West Williamsburg was granted a post office under the new Act, the residents and officials renamed the settlement "Morrisburgh", in honour of Sir James Morris. This compliment to the Honourable gentleman was in recognition of all of his efforts which allowed the village to become established and to grow (The canals and the post office). Morrisburg's first Postmaster, under the new "Post Office Act", was W.G. Stearns.

Morrisburg was incorporated as a village in 1860. In 1864, Sir James Morris gifted the sum of \$100.00 to the village in appreciation of the honour paid to him. The gift was to be used to procure a town clock or a bell. A bell was purchased and placed above the public school which also served as the meeting place for council.

This bell remained above the public school until the Seaway Project at which time it was removed and placed into storage. The bell was then presented to Morrisburg Public School by the Women's Institute and was displayed at the school's entrance until 1992. In 1992, the village of Morrisburg erected a clock tower in the shopping plaza. The bell was relocated from Morrisburg Public School into the clock tower at that time. This final move completed a process that had begun 128 years earlier.

Facts about Sir James Morris:

Sir James Morris was born in Paisley, Scotland, in 1798 and moved to Canada with his parents in 1801. First elected to the House of Assembly, Upper Canada, in 1837 as a "Reformer" from Leeds County, he became a commissioner for the improvement of navigation of the St. Lawrence River in 1838. He was elected member for Leeds County in the United Canada Parliament in 1841, and was appointed to the Legislative Council in 1844. In 1851, Morris was appointed to the Executive Council, and also appointed as Canada's First Postmaster-General in the same year. He was speaker of the House in 1853-1854, and was government director on The Grand Trunk Railroad from 1852-1854. He was speaker of the Legislative Council in 1858, and was Receiver General for Canada in 1862-1863. Sir James Morris died Brockville, Leeds County, Ontario, in 1865.

Ref:Burpee, L.J.; The Makers of Canada Series, The Oxford Encyclopedia of Canadian History, Oxford University Press 1926.

“BITS AND PIECES”

On Saturday, March 31, 2001, Jim Brownell was the guest speaker at the “Gene-O-Rama”, sponsored by the Ottawa Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society. This event was held at the Best Western Macies Hotel in Ottawa, and the participants were taken on a journey through the “Lost Villages”, via the slide presentation “Tales of the Lost Villages, Then and Now”. Those in attendance enjoyed the trip along the old “front”, and the slides of the Long Sault Rapids brought back many fond memories for many of those in attendance. By a show of hands, Jim discovered that more than half of those in attendance had visited the Long Sault Rapids and travelled through some of the “Lost Villages”.

On Sunday, June 17, 2001, Jim Brownell has been invited to give another lecture on an ElderHostel cruise, from the Chrysler Marina at Upper Canada Village, to the port at Montreal. Two similar cruises took place in the summer of 2000, and over

200 American seniors heard of the Hydro and Seaway projects of the 1950s, and the story of the “Lost Villages”. The organizers from ElderHostel Canada were most impressed with the “story” of our great river and “new” Lake St. Lawrence, and, therefore, the return engagement by Jim. These cruises originate in Rhode Island, cruise down to New York, up the Hudson River, across New York state by the Erie Canal, out on Lake Ontario and down through the Thousand Island section of the St. Lawrence. The cruise ship docks at the Upper Canada Marina, to leave at 4:30 a.m. on June 17, bound for Montreal. The lecture on the “Lost Villages” will be from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Once again, it is a pleasure to tell our “story” to a captivated audience.

“INVITATION”, -The Quilt of Belonging is holding “A Spring Gala” on Friday, May 11, 2001, at the NAV Canada Conference Centre, 1950 Montreal Road, Cornwall, at 7:00 p.m. The Master of Ceremonies will be Brian Sylvester, Mayor, City of Cornwall. The program will include a “Fantasy Dessert Buffet”; a preview of the quilt in miniature, comprising the finished blocks; an “Around the World” auction, conducted by Flora Dumouchel; and music by classical guitarist, David Smith. Member will recall that our society visited the project at Williamstown in 2000. The quilt, when finished, will be approximately 30-39 metres in length and 4 metres high. Each block measures 46 centimetres 41 centimetres. There will be approximately 275 blocks, of Ethnic, Aboriginal and Inuit designs. The artistic project, spearheaded by Esther Bryan, has three stages: the design and construction of the tapestry; a book recording the traditions behind the material and design chosen, and technical information on the stitching used to produce each square; and the exhibition of the completed quilt. The organizers of the “Spring Gala” welcome you to the event. Tickets may be obtained at Cornwall and Seaway valley Tourism, 100 Pitt St., Cornwall, 938-4748, or at the “Invitation” project in Williamstown, (613) 347-2381.

A note from Joan Levy-Earle, a “friend” of the Lost Villages Historical Society. Celebrate “Canada Book Day”, Monday, April 23, 2001, at the Sanctuary Book Store, 217 Pitt St., Cornwall, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. Well-known author, storyteller and CBC broadcaster, Mary Cook, will be on hand to autograph her books, autograph books already in your collection, or to meet and touch base with her many fans. Mary Cook is a well-known Canadian author, with “Liar,Liar,Pants on Fire” being one of her most popular books. It is a collection of interesting stories about farm life during the Depression, published in 1995.

Congratulations to Vivian Julien, member of the Lost Villages Historical Society, on her presentation, “The Expulsion of the Acadians”, to Jim Brownell’s “Encore

Seniors' Program" at St. Lawrence College. Vivian contributes much time and effort to the Encore programs at the college, and it is wonderful to see another member of our historical society involved in historical and heritage programming in the community. Besides making the presentation, Vivian also attended the lectures in "Highlighting Canadian Historical Themes" series.

Thank you to Allan Rafuse for his recent literary contributions to the Lost Villages Historical Society. In subsequent newsletters, these documents will be presented. Allan contributed an early 1950's report, prepared and delivered by his late father, Captain Allan Richard Rafuse, of Mille Roches, titled "A Professional Seaman's View of the Need for a St. Lawrence Seaway". As well, Allan prepared a most interesting essay, filled with "Lost Villages" nostalgia, titled "The Sharp Enders & Black Gangs & Cooks of the Pre-Seaway Canal Boats". Look for Allan's work in next month's newsletter.

SEAWAY CONSTRUCTION FACTS, BY THE LATE FREEMAN ELLIOTT

The sod was turned on August 10, 1954, launching the Hydro and Seaway projects, 419 years to the day, (1535), after Jacques Cartier entered the estuary of the St. Lawrence River. In 1913, Ontario Hydro began to study power development on the river. The river provided an artery of 3200 kilometres into the "heart" of the North American continent. Hydro studies were presented to the International Joint Commission in 1921, and a Board of Engineers was formed to study the project. The St. Lawrence Deep Waterway was signed by the U.S.A. and Canadian governments in 1932, but it was not ratified by the U.S. Congress. Subsequent proposals were not approved. In 1952, the Canadian government informed the International Joint Commission that Canada was prepared to undertake the St. Lawrence Seaway alone. On June 7, 1954, the United States of America Supreme Court cleared away the last obstacles for a new Seaway. By an international agreement, Ontario Hydro was given responsibility for the work in Ontario, and the Power Authority of New York State acted for the U.S.A. First tenders were called in July, 1954.

Materials required for completion of all structures on both sides of the St. Lawrence River:

3,200,000 cubic yards of concrete 2,000,000 tons of sand

3,200,000 tons of stone 28,000 tons of structural steel

20,000 tons of gates, hoists and cranes 59,000 tons of reinforcing steel

3,600,000 barrels of cement

Robert Moses-Robert Saunders Powerhouses, -between Canadian mainland and eastern end of Barnhart Island, 3,300 feet/1007 metres long.

Long Sault Control Dam, -Constructed by the Power Authority of New York State. 2,250 feet/683 metres long and maximum height of 145 feet/44 metres above the foundation. Its functions are to combine with the powerhouse to maintain the head water required to operate the turbines and pass any excess water.

Iroquois Control Dam, -25 miles/40 kilometres upstream from the Long Sault Control Dam. It is a straight-line structure, 2,540 feet/770 metres long and 67 feet/20 metres high. Its function is to control the outflow of water from Lake Ontario. Mostly located in the U.S.A. and built by the Power Authority of New York.

Dykes, 16 miles, 26.6 kilometres, built to contain the headpond, Lake St. Lawrence.